

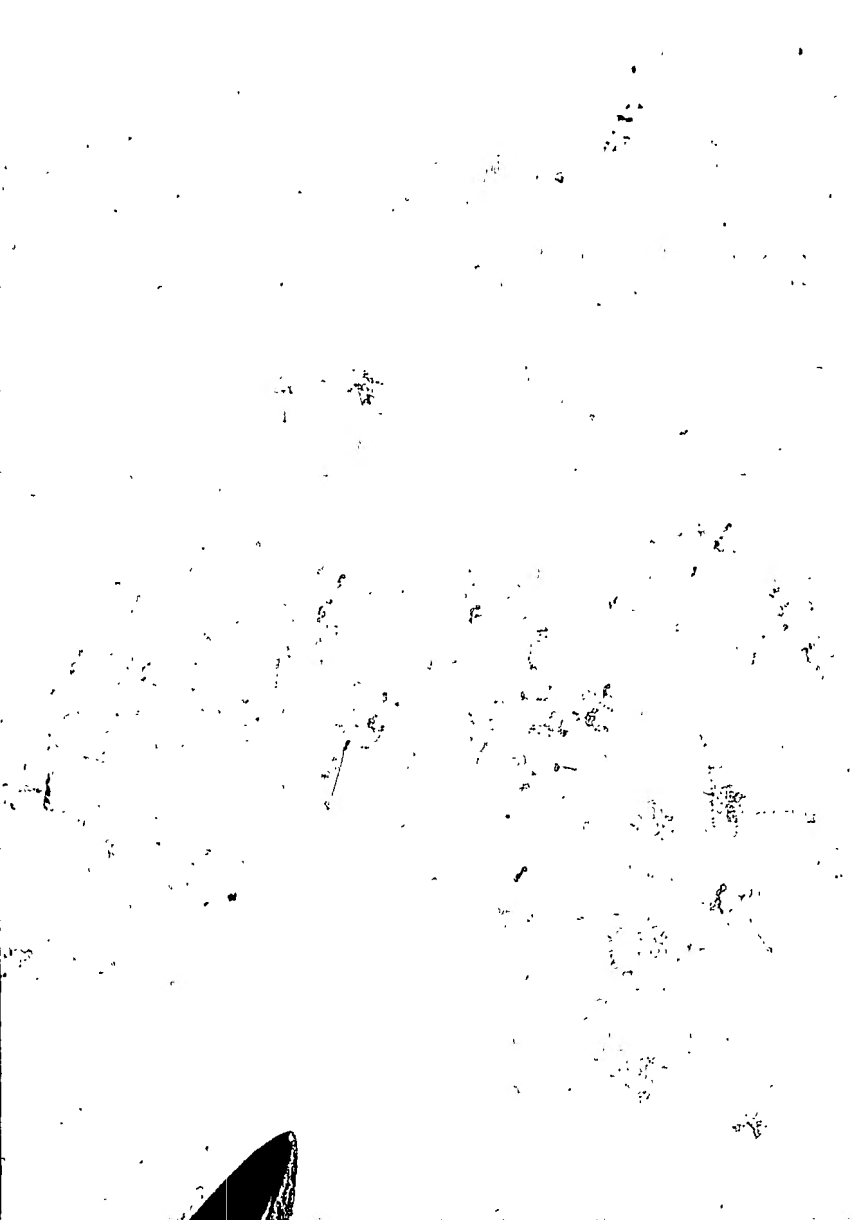


THE GOPHER'S TAIL: A GOOD LUCK BRINGER

IN THREE CHAPTERS

CONTAINING THE CREE FOLK
STORY OF THE GOPHER'S
ORIGIN, HERE SET FORTH IN
PRINT FOR THE FIRST TIME

WINNIPEG, CANADA
CHRISTMAS, 1903

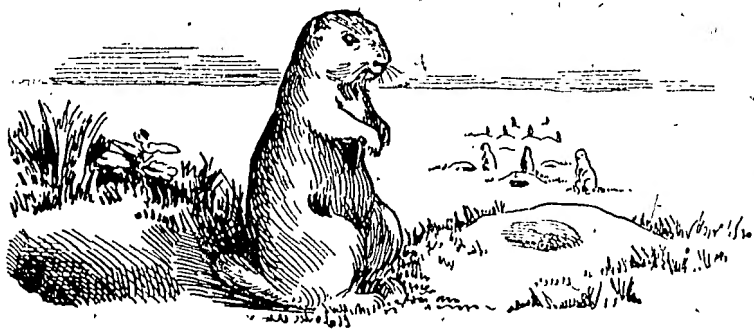


Extract from the Journal (1770-1781) of a Gentleman in the service of the Honorable the Hudson's Bay Company, at Cumberland House, a Post of the Company on the Saskatchewan River:

"There is a Custom obtains here among the Savages, the wch I think not to have Observed among the Nations, whose Countrys I passed on my Journey hither. When a thing Befalls, the Import of wch is like to shew Disaster-ous to these People, they go not about to Avoid it, but place thr Faith wholly in thr Medecine Man, as they call him. This Imposter, to his Shame be it said, Scrupels not to Deseave these poor Wretches, Pretending to Powers the wch Belongs Alone to the Almighty; and asking Guerdon for Actes of the Ellements, the wch he Boasts were done by his Magick, whereas it is not really so, but by Prayer of him who Believes in God the Father. This Wicked man Hesitates nothing but Gives to each who Goes upon a Journey, the Tayl of a Gouffre, a curious, smalle Animal wch Burrows in the Ground and is Gregarious, of a comical Gravity when it Sitteth up, and withal of a Timid and Enquering Disposition, very Ptentifull hereabout. This, he tells these Credulous fools, will Protect thr Bodys from all Hurte, whether it be of Water or Fyer or the Wilde Beastes that Frequent the Wildernesse. Contenting himself not with such like Foolish stories he Moreover for his Gayn imposes upon the Simplicity of his Dupes, Promysing to All who Buy his Medecine (the wch he calls these Tayls) many Beaver and Food in Plenty and that It will be to them in all Wayes a Bringer of Good Luck, so long as that the Hayr of the Tayle be not Rubbed or Broken. It is Pityfull to see the Eagerness of these Deluded men after these Paltry Tayles over wch thr Medecine Man hath performed his Heathenish Incantacions; Cherishing them often with more Sollicitude and Carefullness than thr Wives and Children."



Accompanying this little book is a gopher's tail, mounted. It was found impossible to procure in due time as many of these as had been arranged for. The Indians on the Reserves in Alberta declared that their squaws and youngsters would have no trouble in getting thousands of gophers if they were required; but the gophers, as if they had scented the plot that was afoot against them, retired to their burrows much earlier than for many years. Only 833 tails having been received in Winnipeg in time to be mounted, the same number—and no more—of this book have been printed. This is No.



CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH THERE IS SOMETHING SAID OF THE PROCURING
OF THE TALLS; AND OF SUNDRY OTHER MATTERS

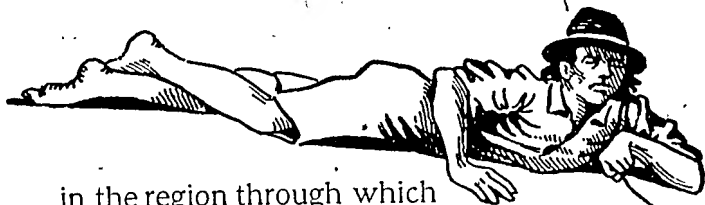
IN CASE it has never been your fortune to share the "rude hospitality of the wandering Crees*"—though to speak nowadays of the Crees as wandering, is, of course, wide of the mark—it is highly unlikely that you will be aware of the significance of the accompanying gopher's tail. The Cree, instead of being any more a wanderer like his ancestor, who has long vanished with the buffalo into the irrevocable past, lives now upon a reserve set



apart for him by a paternal Government, as do all the descendants of the original holders in fee simple of the vast prairies of Western Canada, which are now being turned to the service of man. The latter day Cree thus has a fixed place of abode ; but this fact does not materially increase the likelihood of your ever having been his guest and heard him relate the ancient folk lore of his tribe.

Before proceeding to the consideration of the Cree folk story regarding the origin of the gopher, something is to be said about the accompanying mounted specimen of the tail of that little animal. The gopher that wore it until a couple of months ago, when he and many others of his tribe were snared by the Cree children, had his burrow on the prairie some eight hundred miles northwest of Winnipeg,



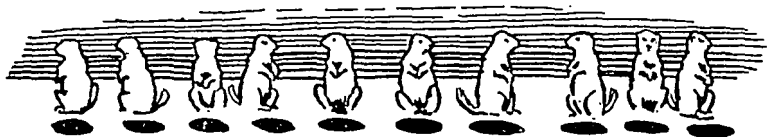


in the region through which flows the great Saskatchewan. It was through the Hudson's Bay Company's officials that the Cree children were set to work catching gophers, upon whose tails—not heads—a price had been set by the Free Press; as it was through the Hudson's Bay Company's officials that the reindeer pemmican made at Fort McPherson, a post of the Company sixty-five miles within the Arctic Circle and 2,978 miles northwest of Winnipeg, was secured, which the Free Press sent out last year in little canvas sacks as a Christmas present to its friends.

Concerning the gopher, there is not much information that is to be found in print outside the passing mention made



in the books of travellers across the prairies, of whom so many have found something to say of the bolt upright position of the little animal as it sits at the entrance of its burrow, the comic suddenness of its disappearance head first, with a vanishing flicker of its tail, upon the least alarm, and the cautious inquisitiveness with which it peers out of its hole before emerging again. In the following pages the Cree legend of the origin of the gopher is given in print for the first time. It is given as it was heard among the Crees by a retired official of the Hudson's Bay Company, who for over forty years was in familiar contact with the Indians and is an authority on their customs, traditions and folklore.



CHAPTER II.

Of the Ancient Greatness of the Prairie Dogs, and
Their Fall Into Evil Ways: and How the
Transgressors Were Dealt With

MANY years before the advent of man upon the earth, so the legend goes, when only the Great Spirit and a few animals were in existence, there were no gophers. But among the animals which had appeared were the prairie dogs.* Now, the prairie dogs were fond of good cheer and were industrious in collecting and storing food in their dens, so as to live through the hard seasons in comfort. Such was their intelligence that they developed among them the principle of co-operation and lived in colonies, or bands; as, indeed,



* The Cree legend of the origin of the prairie dog is notable among Indian folk tales for its humor. It ought properly to be given here as the precursor of the story of the gophers; but its humor is so broadly Rabelaisian as to put that quite out of the question.

they do to the present day in their villages. For a long time they lived in luxury, until they became lazy, and degeneration set in. Some of them took to stealing from their neighbors' stores, to save themselves the trouble of gathering their own food. This evil grew, and things came to such a pass that no one was sure of having enough food to last him through the winter. The time was being spent in watching for opportunities of theft that should have gone in honest labor.

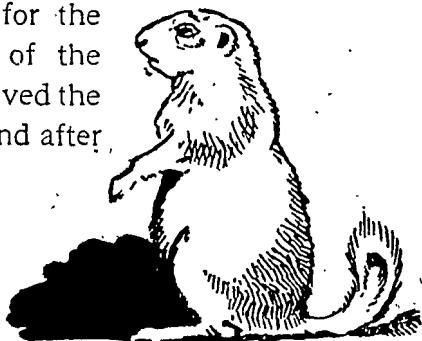
The wise heads among them soon realized that such a state of affairs could not continue, and determined to approach the Great Spirit and seek his guidance. So a deputation made up of the oldest and wisest of the prairie dogs was sent to interview War-sa-ka-chark; for such was the name by which the Great Spirit





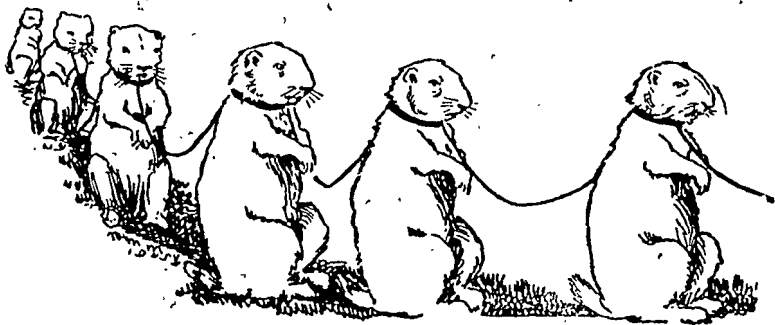
was known among the animals. They laid the grievous state of their nation before him, reciting how the next winter was likely to bring the whole tribe to a miserable end by starvation, so little food had been collected; the energies of most of the prairie dogs being directed towards appropriating each for himself as much as possible of the scanty store.

The Great Spirit, whose whole time and thought were devoted to improving the conditions of existence for his animals and laying down laws for the better government of the different tribes, received the deputation kindly, and after hearing what they had to say, pointed out that the first



thing was to catch the thieves. He told them this would require great cunning and showed them how to make snares to take the thieves alive. When as many as could be kept prisoners had been caught, they were to be brought before him.

The delegates went home, set their snares, and in a few days had caught as many as a hundred young thieves. These they brought before War-sa-ka-chark, as he had commanded. War-sa-ka-chark then made a long speech, in which he condemned the laziness which had spread like a disease among the prairie dogs; and he announced that he would punish severely the captured wrongdoers in such a



way that their disgrace would be remembered by all who came afterwards.

War-sa-ka-chark then proceeded to the sentence. He deprived not only the transgressors but all their kindred of their power to climb trees, and condemned the whole tribe of prairie dogs to live for all time to come in the ground in holes. He plucked the long hair and most of the under fur from the culprits and left them very sensitive to the cold in winter and the flies in summer. He made their hearts weak and timid, so that the slightest sound would drive them into their holes, in fear; and he gave them to the other prairie



dogs for slaves, ordaining that they and their descendants should serve for all time as sentinels around the prairie dogs' villages.

Ever since, wherever prairie dogs are to be found, the gophers will be seen standing bolt upright in front of their holes all around the village, keeping watch so that when an enemy appears, the prairie dogs may be warned of his approach by the sudden disappearance of the sentinels into their holes.* And whenever provisions get scarce and the prairie dogs become hungry, their minds go back to the time when their forefathers nearly suffered extinction by starvation on account of the ancestors of these sentinels; and they feed on the gophers, until the time of plenty comes again. Thus ends the legend.

* In the Cree language the gopher is called *sarki*, which means "sentinel."





CHAPTER III:

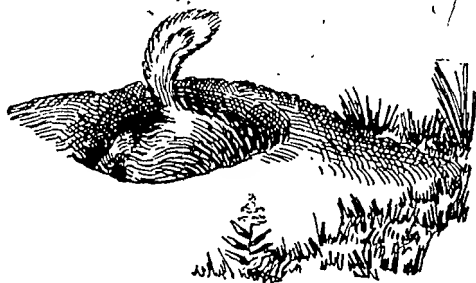
Concerning the Significance of the Gopher's Tail as an Offering of Friendship

TO the Indian children the gopher was pointed out by their elders as a little schoolmaster in the great virtue of vigilance. Courage and unceasing vigilance—these were the two virtues which made up the main part of “the whole duty of man,” as it was understood among the Indians.

At a treaty pow-wow, when friendship was being cemented between two tribes with much oratory and smoking of the peace pipe and giving and taking of gifts the orators on each side declared the desire of their tribe to render to the other tribe many services, including the service of vigilant watchfulness like that rendered to the prairie dogs by the sentinel gophers.

On these occasions the Indian orator at

the end of his speech always delivered a belt of wampum or beaver skin, or some other present to perpetuate the remembrance of his words. In token of the good will and friendship of his tribe and their desire to place themselves completely at the service of their allies, what could be more appropriate than the giving of a gopher's tail? It is thus in token of good will that the Free Press begs your acceptance of the gopher's tail that accompanies this little book. No "Heathenish Incantacions" have been performed over it by a medicine man; but, to make amends, the Free Press sends with it all good wishes in the hope that they will be of at least as much avail as the medicine man's "Magick" of old, to make it "in all Wayes a Bringer of Good Luck" to you.



THE PRAIRIE EMPIRE

AREA—Western Canada—that is to say, the Province of Manitoba and the Territories of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta—has a total area of 384,132,000 acres. The total number of acres that have so far been homesteaded, sold or transferred to railway and colonization companies is 25,750,000. After making liberal deductions for waste land and water areas, more than 250,000,000 acres yet remain the property of the Dominion Government—ample to provide homesteads for millions of farmers. On the vast arable and pasture areas of Western Canada, the finest of grain and the best of stock can be raised, and the quality of both is only exceeded by the quantity that can be raised. Not more than a mere fraction of these immense areas having yet been settled, the development of Western Canada is only in its beginning.

POPULATION—In 1870, 20,000 (10 per cent whites); in 1881, 87,775; in 1891, 219,305; in 1901, 413,887; in 1908, 625,000.

IMMIGRATION—The following are the total figures of immigration for the past seven years, as given in the annual reports of the Department of the Interior, the Dominion fiscal year ending June 30: 1897, 19,304; 1898, 31,900; 1899, 44,543; 1900, 44,097; 1901, 49,144; 1902, 67,158; 1903, 124,058. For the months succeeding the close of the fiscal year 1903, the figures are as follows:

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Total
British	5,071	3,955	3,201	3,505	15,832
Other European	3,251	2,878	2,275	1,404	9,808
United States ..	8,593	3,526	3,049	4,837	15,875
Total	11,885	10,397	9,425	9,806	41,573

The figures for November not available at the time of going to press.

RAILWAY MILEAGE—The first railway built in Western Canada was from Emerson, on the Dakota boundary, to Winnipeg. It connected Winnipeg with St. Paul, and by this route much of the immigration of the early eighties came into this country. This was rapidly followed by the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which was completed across the continent in 1887, and which has many branches throughout the West, one of them being the Soo line, which enters the Territories from the United States at Portal; by this line much of the immigration from the United States comes into the country. The Canadian Northern, which three years ago acquired the Canadian lines of the Northern Pacific, is building towards Edmonton and the Pacific, and constructing branch lines wherever settlements demand facilities. The new National Transcontinental Railway, or Grand Trunk Pacific,

on which work will commence next spring, will open up vast new areas of Western Canada. Manitoba is to-day covered by a network of railway branches, and in the Territories the building of railways is being pushed with rapidity. The following figures show the growth of railway mileage: 1878, 64 miles; 1883, 630 miles; 1888, 2,366 miles; 1893, 3,277 miles; 1898, 3,870 miles; 1903, 4,555 miles.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS—The total value of the agricultural products of Manitoba in 1902, as set forth in the Provincial Government's reports, was \$11,707,339. In 1902 it was \$44,393,744. Last year's crop in Manitoba and the Territories was as follows:

	Wheat	Oats	Barley
Manitoba bushels	53,077,267	34,478,100	11,848,422
N. W. Territories "	14,649,500	10,725,500	844,000
Total (bushels)	67,726,767	45,203,600	12,702,422

For the present crop year, the official figures of grain inspected at Winnipeg up to November 30, show 18,494 cars of wheat, at an average of 1,000 bushels per car, 270 cars of oats, 89 cars of barley, 315 cars of flax, and 3 cars of speltz. This year's wheat ground into flour at country points is estimated at 1,150,000 bushels up to November 30. Some 7,000 bushels are in store at country points and considerable quantities are still held by farmers. The following figures give the total acreages under crop last year and this year:

	1902	1903
Manitoba	3,174,322	3,757,173
Territories	989,639	1,103,721
Totals	4,163,961	4,860,894

The Territorial Government's crop statistics for 1903 have not yet been issued. The Manitoba Government's statistics have appeared in a bulletin of the Department of Agriculture, just published, which shows that during the year 1903 Manitoba produced a total of all grains of 82,570,519 bushels. The total yield of each cereal is as follows:

Wheat	40,116,878
Oats	33,035,774
Barley	8,807,252
Flax	504,440
Rye	40,900
Peas	34,154
Total	82,570,519

The same Government bulletin gives the amount expended in new farm buildings in 1903 as \$2,901,752. In 1902 the amount expended in farm buildings was \$2,228,875. This year there is an increase of \$732,877. These figures do not include buildings in towns and villages. They are a fair index of the prosperity of the farming

community. The number of threshing outfits in operation in Manitoba this year is 2,347. The total area prepared in Manitoba for the crop of 1904 is 2,385,505 acres, 854,510 acres in excess of the area prepared in 1902 for this year's crop.

ELEVATOR CAPACITY—At every point on the lines of railroad intersecting Western Canada, elevators have been built to facilitate the handling and shipment of the grain. At many towns of 1,000 population or less, rows of elevators of the united capacity of 300,000 bushels are frequent. In addition to the storage at the points of initial shipment, there are at Port William and Port Arthur at the head of Lake Superior elevators of millions of bushels capacity, equipped with the most modern appliances for the speedy loading of vessels, to carry the grain to the seaboard. The following figures show the manner in which the elevator capacity, which now totals 30,333,400 bushels has grown: 1891, 7,628,000 bushels; 1901, 21,000,000 bushels; 1902, 26,208,000 bushels; 1903, 30,333,400 bushels.

THE "AMERICAN INVASION"—In 1890, the number of settlers who came into this country from the United States was 44. In 1897, the number was 712; in 1898, 2,643; in 1899, 2,333; in 1900, 3,791; in 1901, 6,506; in 1902, 20,388; in 1903 (fiscal year ending June 30) 47,780. The unqualified success achieved by the pioneers of this movement has been largely instrumental in its growth, and must result in its extension to still larger proportions. American farmers can sell their lands at high prices and come to Canada and get better and more fertile land at from one-twentieth to one-quarter the cost. This is, in brief, the reason of the "invasion."



THE CITY OF WINNIPEG

THE CITY'S BEGINNINGS—In the first issue of the Free Press, which appeared on November 9, 1872, a record of the small beginnings from which Winnipeg began is preserved for the future historian of the West. Speaking first of the population of the infant city, the initial issue of the Free Press said;

"The population was three hundred in the fall of 1870; and we find it to have increased to seven hundred in the fall of 1871, or an addition of four hundred persons. This first day of November shows a population of 1,407.

Farther on in the article we read:

"Of these 1,407, we find 1,019 males and 448 females, a disparity noticeable at first in most Western towns, and is here explained by the fact that few immigrants are accompanied by their families, for whom they first secure a home and then return or send, as well as because so large a proportion is made up of young men."

The article goes on to deal humorously with the demand for young women in Winnipeg thirty-one years ago, giving a number of instances of the eagerness of bachelor pioneers to become benedicts. Passing to the building operations of 1872, we read:

"In taking the number of houses erected during the building season of the present year to the first of November, those so nearly completed as to ensure their fitness for occupancy before winter closes in were included, of which there are, of stores, dwellings and warehouses of one storey, 34; of one and one-half storeys, 33; of two storeys, 56; and of two and a half storeys, 1. Total, 124—equal to the total number of buildings within the same limits one year ago.

"As regular mechanics are very scarce, farmers, laborers and greenhorns generally have to be crowded into the ranks and employers are not apt to criticise too closely the finish of a joint or the smoothness of a surface of paint; which, though a disadvantage of course, furnished profitable employment to many immigrants who arrived too late to work their claims this season."

POPULATION—In 1870 the population of Winnipeg, as we have just seen, was 300; and in 1872 it was 1,407. In 1885 it had risen to 19,574; in 1898 to 39,384. On October 1, 1903, it was 64,215.

BUILDING PROGRESS—The number of building permits issued in 1903, up to November 30, was 1,215, representing a total value of \$5,814,000. Of these 1,126 were, for dwelling houses, totalling \$2,611,455. On buildings for educational and religious purposes a total of \$175,000 has been expended this year. Fifty-three warehouses, factories, banks and office blocks and sixty-five retail stores have been erected this year. The assessment of the city for purposes

of taxation was in 1885, \$22,411,005; in 1898, \$27,038,020; in 1903, based on valuations in October, 1902, it is \$43,003,000. Rate of taxations, 21½ mills.

BANK CLEARINGS—As a financial centre Winnipeg ranks third among the cities of Canada. The city has thirteen chartered banks. Only Montreal and Toronto show larger bank clearings. The following figures give the annual returns of the bank clearings in Winnipeg for the past four years: 1900, \$100,950,720; 1901, \$134,199,438; 1902, \$188,370,003; 1903 (to November 30) \$218,758,978.

POST OFFICE AND CUSTOMS—Number of letters mailed in Winnipeg in 1896, 2,539,914; in 1902, 5,609,872; in 1903, up to November 30, 6,236,859. Gross postal revenue in 1896, \$91,418; in 1902, \$156,734; in 1903, up to November 30, \$172,407. Customs duties collected in 1900, \$974,420; in 1901, 1,486,564; in 1902, \$1,933,082; in the eleven months ending November 30, 1903, \$2,048,014. Inland Revenue in 1900, \$561,694; in 1901, \$537,958; in 1902, \$637,881; in the eleven months ending November 30, 1903, \$787,457.

WINNIPEG, DULUTH AND CHICAGO—Mr. C. N. Bell, Secretary of the Winnipeg Grain and Produce Exchange, writes a letter to the Free Press:

"I think that but few of our own people fully realize the volume of grain that is exported from Manitoba and the Northwest Territories. The data relating to the grain inspected in this city during the grain fiscal year ending 30th August, 1903, has been compiled and a reference to it reveals the fact that Winnipeg receipts of wheat for the past year greatly exceed those of Chicago, or of Duluth-Superior. Following are the figures: Winnipeg, wheat, 51,833,000 bushels; Duluth-Superior, wheat 42,406,923 bushels; Chicago, wheat 37,940,953 bushels. It will now be in order, so far as relates to the grain arrivals at least, to abandon the trite saying that Winnipeg will some day be a second Chicago, for Chicago makes a poor showing as compared with this great wheat handling centre."

SOME WINNIPEG STATISTICS—Public schools, 18, with an attendance of 9,566; number of arc lights, 250; number of hydrants, 450; miles of street railway, 18; water mains, 80 miles; sewers, 70 miles; asphalt pavement, 12 miles; block pavement, 18½ miles; macadam pavement, 30 miles; boulevards, 44 miles; stone sidewalks, 16 miles; plank sidewalks, 179 miles; number of miles of graded streets, 123.

MANITOBA FREE PRESS

WINNIPEG, CANADA

CIRCULATION STATEMENT

Illustrating Growth in Circulation 1901, 1902, 1903.
Morning and Evening Editions

Month	Sworn Daily Average		
	1903	1902	1901
January	16,497	13,907	12,742
February.....	17,180	14,442	13,227
March	17,372	14,405	13,175
April	17,733	14,874	13,359
May	17,994	14,860	13,316
June	18,485	15,219	13,391
July	19,481	15,713	13,941
August	19,610	16,173	13,883
September	19,504	16,095	14,020
October	20,057	15,787	14,042
November	20,846	16,217	13,963
December.....		16,802	12,973

"Printers' Ink," New York, says: "An examination of Rowell's American Newspaper Directory for 1903 reveals the fact that in Manitoba and the Canadian Northwest, including Winnipeg, the Manitoba Free Press and the Free Press Evening News Bulletin has a higher circulation rating than is accorded to all the other daily papers combined, and the Weekly Free Press has a higher circulation than is accorded to any other Weekly."

The district in question embraces all the territory from Fort William on Lake Superior, in Northern Ontario, to the Rocky Mountains, a distance of over 1,363 miles, and north and south between these points from the international boundary to Edmonton, the largest town in the north, a distance of 350 miles. In this territory there are published nine daily newspapers, and the combined daily circulation of the nine falls short by many thousands of the daily circulation of the Free Press.

MANITOBA FREE PRESS

WINNIPEG, CANADA

ADVERTISING RATE CARD

In Force December, 1903

and Until Further Notice

Commercial Display—8½c. per Agate line flat; preferred position if granted, 10 per cent additional next reading matter, 15 per cent additional top of column, 25 per cent additional full position. Back page, special; no advertisement exceeding single column size permitted on this page, and all available space on this particular page is sold for year 1904. NO DISCOUNT FOR TIME OR SPACE.

"Pull out if it does not pay."

Pure Reading Matter—No advertisement run as pure reading matter.

Readers (by which is meant advertisements set in news style and type run at bottom of column and separated from reading matter by double rule), in every case double display rates.

Reports of Meetings, Financial Statements of Banks, Insurance Companies and Kindred Institutions inserted at double display rates.

Classified Advertisements, under any heading, 1c. per word, six consecutive insertions for the price of four; 5,000 word contract \$25.00, or ½c. per word per insertion, to be used within a year.

Births, Marriages and Deaths—50c. per insertion.

Advertisers are not obliged to use the Free Press, but if they do they pay the rates here set forth without any discount, abatement or concessions of any sort.

NOTICE

THE FREE PRESS is the first Canadian newspaper to adopt the flat rate, the fair rate to the advertiser, and is to-day the only paper in the Dominion possessing a flat rate.

THE FREE PRESS is the only newspaper in the Canadian North West that furnishes regularly detailed sworn returns of circulation.

THE FREE PRESS will cancel any advertising contract upon request without notice.

THE FREE PRESS prints the largest paper in Canada, never less than 16 pages every day with thirty-two pages every Saturday, and carries more advertising in its columns than any other Canadian newspaper, morning or evening, and publishes the announcements of more individual advertisers than any other daily paper in the Dominion. Of condensed or classified advertisements it carries regularly three full pages set close in solid Agate type or more advertisements of this class than any other daily paper on the continent published in a city corresponding in size to Winnipeg.



PRINTED BY
THE MANITOBA FREE PRESS JOB DEPARTMENT
WINNIPEG, CANADA

